



IN OTHER WORDS:

WELCOME THE FUTURE OF ENERGY WITH OPEN ARMS

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MITCHELL (SOUTH DAKOTA) DAILY REPUBLIC

By Sampson A. Brown

As president/CEO of Knight & Carver Wind Group, with a full-scale wind blade manufacturing and service facility in Howard, I have this promise to make: If the Clean Energy Bill now being considered in Congress is successfully approved, our facility could easily double or triple in size, output and, most importantly, our workforce.

That would be our response to the increased demand that will undoubtedly result from transitioning to a clean energy economy.

In Howard, we are proud to employ 60 workers. That's quite a sizable workforce for a town which boasts a population of 1,200 – and growing. Thanks largely to the Rural Learning Center – formerly known as the Miner County Community Revitalization – Howard has become an exceptional example of a small, rural Midwest town whose population has increased instead of declined.

Simply stated: Because of wind energy, Howard is now thriving. That's an indisputable fact. And it's no small accomplishment, especially in this economy.

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Let's consider some more facts:

- According to the American Wind Energy Association, South Dakota's wind energy resources could produce more than 300 billion kilowatt hours of electricity each year. How much energy is that? It's 50 times more than the amount of electricity our state currently generates – and enough to power more than 27 million homes.
- Repower South Dakota estimates that investing \$390 million annually in South Dakota's clean energy economy could create more than 5,000 jobs in our state.

Right now, Howard is thriving because of job creation, much of it directly related to wind energy, which has generated dozens of family-supporting jobs that didn't even exist two years ago. We are proud of our 60 employees and – believe me – we intend to hire many more in 2010.

That's the point: New energy brings new opportunities, not only for our employees, but for all of South Dakota, where our state's largely untapped wind resources rank as the fourth strongest in the country.

No doubt, reasonable people will disagree about some vital elements of the energy bill, the final version of which won't be crafted for many more weeks. That in mind, I offer this bold prediction: It won't be perfect – not for companies like ours and not for energy consumers like you.

But here's the bottom line: We want Knight & Carver, our 60 employees, the people of South Dakota and America to prosper. And the best way for South Dakota's overall economy to prosper is for all of us to welcome the future of energy with open arms.

From our perspective, it's an essential element of the age-old political process to make reasonable compromises in legislation, especially such sweeping legislation as the energy bill. But simply blocking legislation without offering a viable alternative isn't progress – that's nothing but stagnation.

As a company that has invested heavily in this state's future, we can't afford stagnation – and neither can the state.

I know this: We're just beginning to grow in South Dakota.

Sampson A. Brown is president and CEO of Knight & Carver Wind Group, which operates a facility in Howard.